

Cultivating Nurturing Self Talk

The critical self-talk in a person's mind is usually negative, harsh, berating and judgmental about themselves and others, affecting a person's self-esteem. The critic may always be there to some degree, but how a person responds to it can change the impact it has.

Developing nurturing self-talk is one way to reduce the negative effects of the internal critic. It can be difficult for some people to start developing nurturing self-talk and imagining it as a truly good friend can be helpful. It is kind of dialogue often used when speaking to loved ones and can be supportive, compassionate, understanding, accepting, encouraging. The nurturing inner dialogue remains the same whatever happens in life.

ACTIVITY

If you were to bring nurturing self-talk into your mind,

1. What would it sound like?

2. What kind of qualities would it have?

3. What sort of things would it say?

Replacing the Inner Critic with Nurturing Self Talk

ACTIVITY

Critical	Nurturing
"Now look what you've gone and done!"	"I worked hard on this and I tried my best."
"People don't like me"	"I cannot possibly be liked by everyone. I don't like everyone I meet either. It is ok. I will be ok."
"I can't do anything right."	"I try my best to be a good person. I'm allowed to give myself space to grow."
"I look stupid."	"I am allowed to feel bad sometimes but it doesn't make it true."
"I won't bother trying again."	"I can't expect myself to do things perfectly."
"I won't say anything because nobody will listen to me"	"Everyone should be able to say how they feel. Even though I don't quite believe it, this includes me."
"I don't deserve to be in this job."	"I worked hard to get to where I am. Everyone has self-doubt. It doesn't make the thoughts true."
"I shouldn't feel upset. I'm so weak."	"It's okay to feel upset. It won't last. I have survived harder things than this."
"I should be better."	"I am enough. Even if I don't always believe it, I am enough."
"I wish I was someone else."	"Other people have made me feel like that. It doesn't make it a fact."

Affirmations

Affirmations are positive self-statements that can help change the way a person thinks and feels about themselves. They are the kind of words that the nurturing part would say and using them repeatedly helps to develop and strengthen that nurturing self-talk.

Examples:

